1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
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matter—she will bear her child in the new husband's home and wean it there. The child belongs, however, to the biological father (i.e. the first husband), and must be returned to him as soon as it is weaned. But how will the new husband regard that child? He is bound by tribal custom to treat it during the weaning period with the same care as he would his own, and if he displays ill-nature his new wife will promptly abandon him. If the child by the former husband dies the dead body is sent back to him as proof that it has really died.

A husband, therefore, takes every care to keep his wife contented, and he has studiously to cultivate her parents also. He visits them constantly with gifts, tobacco for the father and salt for the mother (the mother of his wife may not be living with the father of his wife, and he may therefore have to make separate visits to villages perhaps fifty miles apart). The more attractive his wife is, the more presents he must give. There is little question of adultery among the Katab. For no man would think of having sexual relations with the wife of a member of his own local group. The idea would be so repugnant as to be inconceivable. But a clansman of another subdivision may elope with a wife, and when this happens there is no remedy. The first husband cannot claim a refund of the bride-price; he merely hopes that one day his wife will return to him. If he were to demand the return of the bride-price, he would be repudiating his wife for ever; and in any case no Katab would ask for the return of a bride-price for a woman who had lived with him for a year. And so he proceeds to make good his loss by trying to abduct the wife of some other clansman (who does not belong to his own subdivision).

There is no doubt that the custom of sub-marriages plays a predominant part in the social life of a Katab, who may be said to spend the year endeavouring to retain a wife who suits him, or in working out the means by which he can obtain the wife of someone else. If he saves money it is with a view to contracting a sub-marriage, a barren investment if the woman leaves without even becoming enceinte.

Family Life and Occupations.—The Katab are agriculturists pure and simple; they have practically no industries. They farm rather more extensively than most pagan tribes, the average acreage per adult farmer ranging from four to six. A grown-up

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534 drums are double or single-membrane drums of the hour-glass pattern. A common type of drum used by children is a pot with the bottom knocked out and covered with a goatskin. 533 It is beaten with a stick. Songs are sung in a minor key, and 535 the horn players contort their bodies as they move round in a circle. All sections of society join in the dance. Boys skip round and girls yodel as they follow suit. Old men move round sedately, and mothers with babes on their backs join in.

526 The Katab young men hold games annually, which are known as the Chodong Gane and resemble the *shero* contest of the Fulani. A string is tied round the contestant's waist and he is pulled backwards and forwards by other young men of a different clan, as though he were some wild animal. He is then released and falls on the others with a cane, and they in turn thrash him soundly. The body is protected with cummerbunds of cloth, and the game is considered a test of endurance. Girls and women attend and ply the competitors with beer. It is to be noted that a man will not join in a contest with a fellow clansman of an opposite subdivision, i.e. with one who stands to him in the relation of a *nungvan*.

771 *Religion*.—The Katab does not appear at first sight to be profoundly influenced by religious ideas. He does not subject himself to innumerable taboos or surround himself with amulets and talismans. He does not set up in his compound an array of material objects which are believed to be the abode of spiritual forces. He believes in the existence of evil spirits, but he does not live in constant dread of them or find it necessary to be continually offering sacrifice. He is not, like the Bura, a devotee of a host of Nature spirits. When he sees the new moon he offers a prayer for health and prosperity, but the prayer is addressed to Gwaza, the Sky God. This nonchalant attitude may be due to a long association with Hausa Muslims, but it is true to say of the majority of the tribes speaking the languages of the Middle Zone that they are not, like the Jukun, Okpoto, Yoruba, and Igara, dogged at every turn by the fear of occult influences.

769 Nevertheless, the Katab is strongly imbued with animistic 593 ideas, which find their expression principally in the rites connected with the recognition of the kindred and family ancestors. This 888 ancestral cult is for him merely an extension of the principle

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governing his every-day life that if things are going wrong he takes his troubles and a pot of beer to his father (in the classificatory sense), who drinks it ceremonially and speaks the necessary words of comfort and assurance. For the Katab, though he may on occasion show disrespect to the head of his family, is a great believer in the magical power of the old man. To secure his father's blessing is as important for him as it was for Jacob, and to incur his curse or even censure is to lay himself open to one misfortune after another. And so a young man who has spoken angry words to his father or uncle will soon seek reconciliation by means of an offering of beer and a chicken. Or if he finds himself pursued by ill luck he will go to his father and inquire whether he had offended him at some time in the past. A married daughter, living in some distant village and having for some reason incurred her father's displeasure, will send her husband to her father with a chicken and beer, asking for forgiveness, and will throw ashes on her shoulders.

While your father is alive you have a living protector, and you do not, therefore, require to appeal to the dead; but if your father is dead you continue to take your troubles to him just as you did in his lifetime. And so the head of a family, having no living father, goes, as he feels the necessity, to his father's grave, and there deposits his flask of beer and his offerings of beniseed[1] and a cooked chicken. These he leaves overnight, addressing the spirit of his dead father and explaining the object of his coming. But, being the head of the family, he does not treat the matter as purely personal, and so he collects all his male relatives and may also invite male members of his wife's family. Next morning he escorts them to his father's grave and, assisted by them, repeats his requests of the previous evening. A little of the beer is poured on the grave and pieces of the chicken's flesh and beniseed are offered, the remainder of the offerings being eaten and drunk ceremonially by all present. There is no debauchery at the graveside; but on returning home free play is given to the feelings, and at the ensuing feast enormous quantities of beer are consumed, all members of the family, including females, taking a part.

The head of the family thus acts on behalf of all the members

[1] The use of beniseed in religious rites seems to be general among the pagan tribes of the Northern Provinces.

3:Temple G-4 (no date)1922 FF38 Katab FF38
Kagoma

575 "Each candidate on election is given a gourd, but as it was foreseen that indiscriminate blowing would soon familiarise the women with the 'Dodo's' voice, no one is permitted to blow the gourd without the Magajin Dodo's consent.

"Each village has its 'Dodo' head-man, known as the Magajin Dodo. He is the supreme domestic authority and no woman, not even his wife, is allowed to enter what is designated as his 'Dodo' room. The office is hereditary, and as a rule descends from father to son. The Magajin Dodo always wears a goat-skin slung across his back. He is naturally an object of much awe to the women folk, who endeavour to propitiate him with frequent gifts of 'gia,' so that the venerable gentleman is often to be encountered in a hopelessly drunken condition. 593 It is to him that husbands appeal when their wives turn 626 refractory, and a visit from the dreaded 'Dodo' invariably 575 produces the desired effect. When the Magaji visits a disobedient wife, he is always accompanied by one of his four subordinates, called Magadda in Kagoma. The visit is prearranged and the husband plays the part of a willing accomplice in the ensuing farce.

"The approaching visit of the 'Dodo' is announced to the husband by a messenger sent on in front for that purpose. The husband professes to be very frightened and advises his wives to fly and hide in the *nearest* refuge. (This is so that they shall not be far away when wanted.) On the arrival of the 'Dodo' the erring wife is sent for. Should she refuse to come, the 'Dodo' approaches her hiding-place, and addresses his warning; the uncouth sounds made on the gourd being solemnly translated to her by the subordinate who acts as interpreter throughout. A warning is generally sufficient, but should the wife transgress again the 'Dodo' will order her to be beaten.

"To further impress these simple and credulous women with his powers, the Magajin Dodo will sit outside his house and carry on a conversation with the 'Dodo' who is inside. This is done, of course, by hiding a man inside the house who makes the necessary sounds on the gourd."*

595 There is no limit to the number of wives that may be kept, 262 and the first takes precedence over the rest. They are not allowed to eat meat, or much salt, lest they should become fat and therefore unprolific.

846 On the day that a woman gives birth to a child both she 553 and it are bathed in cold water. Two days later the family-head, *i.e.*, the eldest male member of the family, names the child, [845] of whichever sex it be, except in the case of twins, who are named 852 two months after birth by the oldest man in the village. On

* Mr. H. F. Mathews.

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423 45. It is of interest to note that with these Jabawa the father would still appear to retain the right to refuse to sub-divide the family lands until after his death—a right not so readily acknowledged either by the Kagoro or Katabawa. It also appears, however, that this is a right which would very rarely ever be exercised. Should a married son demand his portion he would be given it without demur whenever he might choose to demand it.

423 46. Responsible opinion, even amongst the "magajin
476 dodo"—the traditional priests—who are the most conservative and staunchest supporters of traditional custom, held that this was accepted custom and had been long established. Their views on the subject are of interest. It is probably true, they say, that in pre-British times individual tenure did not take place to any very great extent; but that was not because it was against the custom. The only reason that kept families and family groups living and farming together on a communal basis was the necessity of the times—the continual threat of Fulani raids and wars. Now, however, there was peace and security; there was no longer any need for them to work together and, indeed, it was much more satisfactory for them to work apart. In the olden days if
423 any member of the compound did not pull his weight he would
476 be given a good beating by the others which he would accept and
627 then get on with his work. If this did not work the threat of handing him over as a slave to the Fulani most certainly would. Nowadays if anybody started beating another he would be taken to Court and fined; and there was no longer the threat of handing him over as a slave. The lazy member of the community could not therefore be made to work and that being so it was much more satisfactory that he should go away and farm on his own rather than that he should feed on other people's labours. A man would not want to work on his own if he were willing to work with the others. If he was not willing then rather than have an unwilling worker they would prefer him to go off on his own. So runs local opinion.

Sub-division.
423 47. The breakdown to individual tenure has brought with it sub-division but no perceptible increase in fragmentation. The latter has always existed. At the present moment sub-division has arrived at a state where any further large increase will prove embarassing. Local opinion does not consider this as an evil inherent in sub-division but as an inevitable consequence of increasing population. Whether or not a family worked together as a whole or individually the amount of land available would not
[31] be altered. Spare lands in these districts are conspicuous by their
[24] absence. All the land that is farmable has been taken up and in some places is kept in continuous cultivation with the aid of manuring.

61. The truth of the matter is as stated in paragraph 44 above. The Jaba who accepted the Fulani domination retained their tribal lands. They still have them. And there are acres and acres to spare. Those who resisted were squeezed into the remnants of land to the South where there was little or any to spare. Pressure of population, incipient land hunger and the spirit of independence, which must have been there, have led to the individualisation of the Jaba Kwoi and accelerated the breakdown to individual tenure. The youths would not go off to the mines if there was abundance at home on the lands available to them. Their relations across the border have had none of this to cope with. Nor did they have their social structure rudely broken up and disintegrated. 184 178

62. The fact remains, however, that within the Emirate the kindred concept remains and is still operative. 612 Kindred holding of lands still existent.

63. Amongst the Kachia Jaba the land pattern is similar to that of the Jaba Kwoi, *i.e.*, compact hamlets or villages standing in the middle of their farmlands and outside these farmlands the villages " spare " lands. The Kagoro, Kaje and Katab do not live together in villages but prefer the small scattered hamlet and isolated farms. Amongst the Kagoro all lands were " allocated "; even the spare bush. Such is not the case with the Kachia Jaba; nor would it be the case, probably, amongst the Jaba Kwoi—had they any spare lands. The spare lands form a general pool for the particular unit within which they lie, *i.e.*, for the kindred. Any member of the kindred has a right to take up sufficient of the spare lands to meet his needs; but he must first of all obtain the Village Head's consent. A Wenyum man has the right to take up the lands he needs in the Wenyum Unit and, on allocation, the lands become inheritable by his kith and kin. A man of the Dun kindred who desired to take up spare lands in the Wenyum Unit would only be loaned the lands and it would always remain a loan. It would never become land of the Dun kindred. A Wenyum man who had inherited or been allocated land in the Wenyum Unit would be entitled to loan it to someone else, either from within or outside his kindred, without asking for anyone's consent. But he could neither give it nor sell it to anyone else, *i.e.*, he could do nothing that would deprive the kindred of its ultimate rights in the land. [621] [361] 423 612

64. Sub-division and inheritance. Though the normal procedure is for farms to remain undivided until the father's death nevertheless, if a son demanded it and was married and of sufficient standing, the father would have to give him his share of the family holding. Women have no share or rights in a farm. Both farm and fallow are divided up; but there is no question of unallocated lands being divided up. A farm once 423 [428] 593

[p. 18]

423 worked would continue to belong to the farmer and his descendants
●593 no matter how long it may have remained unworked. It would not return to the ' pool ' unless all members of the family had died out.

Alienation sale.
425 65. Sale is not customary and would not be acknowledged—not even the restricted form of sale referred to in paragraph 49 above. There is no land hunger and the circumstances for sale do not exist, *i.e.*, a would-be buyer and exchange value for the land.

Loan.
426 66. The loaning of land is customary and is the same in its essential details as that described for the Kagoro with the substitution of the brewing and sharing of a pot of beer for the gift of a chicken. All lands occupied by the Kaje immigrants are loaned. The same rules regarding the building of a house apply—except that a two years' grace period is allowed here instead of the one year with the Kaje.

Pledge.
67. Pledging does not occur. Opinion would not regard it as being in accord with custom if it did.

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[427] 68. Gift, leasing or renting are unknown and would not be acknowledged by custom if they occurred.

Authority in land matters.
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423 69. The normal procedure, both in the past and now, in the case of a farm dispute is for the claimant to a farm or part of a farm to hang up on a bush on the farm a bunch of " Kujemi " leaves. This ensures that the occupier will forthwith cease any work on the farm. He dare not do otherwise. The occupier would then report the matter to the kindred elders who would investigate the rival claims and give their decision. In past times this decision would be observed by both disputants, the elders if necessary giving the tribal oath or " tsafi " to the occupier of the farm. The challenger would have been obliged to accept the decision of the " tsafi " and remove the " Kujemi " leaves—providing, of course, the occupant had not been stricken dead by taking a false oath. Nowadays though most cases would still be settled by the decision of the kindred elders a disputant, if aggrieved by the decision of the elders, could refuse to have the oath given by them and have the matter settled by the Native Court instead. It is to be noted that in the past the elders of the Dun, Kudak, Chorr and Ngeh kindreds would have no say at all in the Wenyum kindred's land matters and *mutatis mutandis*. They would have the power now since representatives of each kindred sit on the Court. The extent to which each of the four kindreds would, in practice, interfere with the decision of the representatives of the fifth kindred is not known. There is, of course, nowadays,